

Defend Elspeth King



ELSPETH KING has been curator of the People's Palace for ne time, she took a semi-derelict building, on the point of collapse and made it into one of the most famous social history muse The building was underfunded, neglected and unwanted, and bears no relationship to that sad place in 1974.

At the same time, she had tried to provide a museums serviv groups in Glasgow, mounting special exhibitions in different p ing special exhibitions on areas such as Easterhouse and Bar Her work is not popular with the city of culture officials, beca Glasgow, and not on the sanitised stories on offer in the like

...to creating a 'new' departmen

ELSPETH KING DEFENCE COMMITTEE

In taking the decision to invite Terry McCarthy to Glasgow the above committee felt the similarities were so obvious that an invitation was justified. As Gwyneth Dinwoody M.P. for Crewe and Nantwich, who was a trustee of the National Museum for Labour History at the time of the uproar in Manchester said, "The situation regarding Elspeth King would seem to almost exactly mirror the Manchester affair. History seems to be repeating itself."

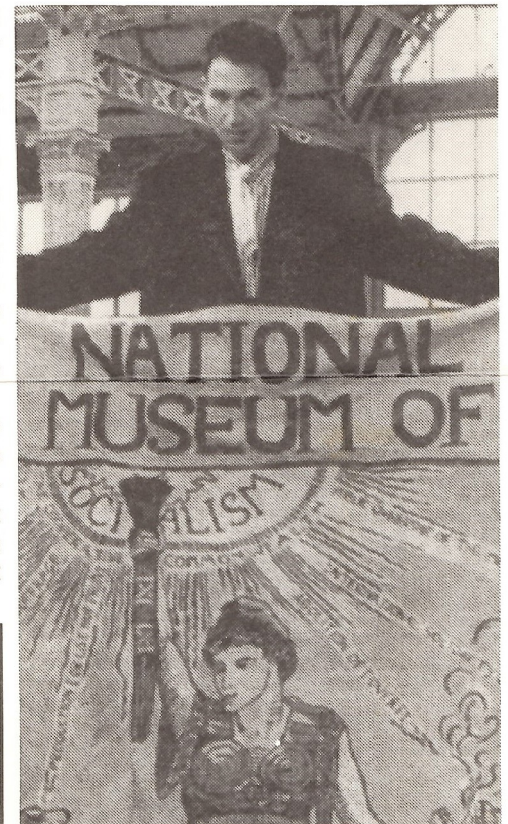
Terry McCarthy comes from a working class background despite going to Oxford University. He feels you cannot package working class history into a marketing operation, it is not a commodity to be dressed up in a public relation exercise, you cannot make it "Smiles Better" and honest social history curators have no desire to do so.

Elspeth King was a coal miners daughter and graduated with honours from St. Andrews University. In the words of Neil Wallace, one of the many high paid officers in charge of Culture City, "Elspeth King had the disinclination to negotiate in a constructive manner and an imperfect understanding of how the political systems work and how they could be used as allies". David Mellor the new Arts Minister who was appointed by Thatcher in the recent reshuffle could not have said it better.

Despite having unlimited resources and cash available for their jewel in the crown for Culture year, the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition produced the biggest flop of the year and any other year with a loss of at least £3.5m. The flock of P.R. agents who have been attracted to Glasgow for the year of culture would, one would have thought, be rethinking their philosophy. Not a bit: they start looking for a scape-goat and lo and behold Elspeth King and Michael Donnelly fit the bill. Yet the Peoples Palace is heading for record attendance figures this year, from staff who have no degrees in public or political relations.

The supporters of Elspeth King have no desire to allow the people's social history to be marketed; they do not see it as a commodity to be milked for all it is worth. They see it as a truth that future generations will learn from and will make them proud of their past and struggle to improve the future.

Come along on Thursday 23rd August at 7.30pm to the Calton Parish Church, Bain Street (Opposite the Barrows) to hear Terry McCarthy and other speakers.



Terry McCarthy

WITCH-HUNT

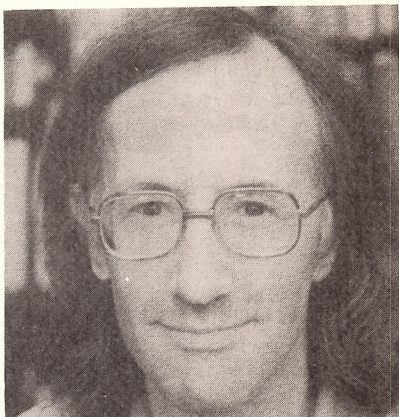
In 1975 Elspeth King and Michael Donnelly were appointed as Curators of the Peoples Palace Museum on Glasgow Green.

The intervening 16 years have seen an extraordinary transformation in its fortunes, as new collections were established on such diverse subjects as Women's Suffrage, Trades Unionism, Religion, Sport, Stained Glass, Temperance and Community Photography. Each new area of activity extended the popular base of the Museum and it began a spectacular renaissance in fortunes which has seen its attendance figures mushroom from an all time low of 80,000 to the point where this year it will break the half million barrier.

But in spite of its growing popularity the Palace and its Curators remained out of favour with a Labour administration steadily abandoning its historic commitment to Socialism and increasingly embarrassed by the inconvenient facts of this city's radical past. As the public relations Juggernaut of "Glasgow's Miles Better" was succeeded by the accolade of European City of Culture, the suppression of that turbulent past became a central issue in the battle for the city's soul. A new sanitised self-congratulatory history was required to comfortably co-exist with the public relations fantasies of Saatchi and Saatchi.

It was for that reason that Pat Lally and his S.D.A. advisors placed lavish funding at the disposal of an alternative exhibition provocatively entitled "Glasgow's Glasgow". It was for that reason, that Elspeth King, so recently interviewed for the post of Director of Museum's was denied the post of Keeper of Social History, and has subsequently been witch-hunted by Lally and his licenced spokesmen Julian Spalding, Neil Wallace, Mark O'Neill and Douglas Clelland. After enduring months of this intolerable behaviour, her deputy, Michael Donnelly has spoken out in her and his own defence. Mr Lally and Mr Spalding's immediate response was his summary dismissal, without notice.

The charge was one of gross misconduct by bringing the District Council into disrepute. While such foul injustices are permitted against the tried and trusted servants of this city, the Council need no assistance from anyone in that regard.



Michael Donnelly : censured with the sack

PUBLIC PROTEST MEETING

with

Michael Donnelly

and

Jim McKechnie

Strathclyde Regional Councillor
(personal capacity)

Charles McDonagh

Chair Shettleston Labour Party
(personal capacity)

plus

Slide Show on the

People's Palace

Dolphin Arts Centre

7 James Street

(at Glasgow Green)

Wed 26th September

7.00pm

WORKERS CITY

DEFEND
ELSPETH KING
SUPPORT
THE PEOPLE'S
CULTURE

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